

# "U. S." Built in 300 Days

**F**IFTY bulldozers churned the ground; rising clouds of dust choked the small army of workers. Seemingly everywhere were machines and men on the move, as though someone had given the signal to re-stage a Western land rush. Thus was the United States—Freedomland-style—put into assembly-line production less than a year ago.

In the months that followed, big chunks of America have risen out of the original swamp. New York of 1850 now stands on reclaimed land. A lazy creek has been miraculously transformed into San Francisco Bay. Mardi Gras is now celebrated where the backwaters of the Hutchinson River flowed. Throughout, several hundred acres of once-devastated property have emerged to resemble the face of our nation.

These swift results came about through studied planning, precise coordination of thousands of workers, skilled engineering and imaginative building.

The "generals" in this campaign were a smoothly functioning team of Turner Construction Co. of New York and Aberthaw Construction Co. of Boston, who were the general contractors, and Cabot, Cabot and Forbes Assocs., the engineers. Under them, many subcontractors carried out specific phases of the "battle plan." Among the important subcontractors, Slattery Contracting Co. moved approximately a million yards of earth for general site grading; Fischback & Moore did the electrical work; C. H. Cronin, Inc., the plumbing; White Plains Iron Works, Inc., structural steel and miscellaneous iron work; J. I. Haas Company, Inc., painting; Lenesch and Dutton, landscaping; Fulton Roofing Corp., the roofing; A. Balanger & Sons, Inc., waterproofing. Other firms playing a part were Taylor Lumber Co. and Samuel Lakow & Sons, Inc.

## Race Against Time

The whole job was a battle against time—to build a small nation to meet a deadline. Foundations—all wood pilings—were installed by George W. Rogers Construction Co. and Naclerio Pelham Contracting Co. carted in a quarter million yards of borrowed fill to raise the ground level. This came from as many as 25 different sources in and around the metropolitan area; at times Freedomland equipment would excavate at other locations just to get fill material.

Underground, Freedomland is more complicated than a city. The result is most efficient utility and protection service. In fire protection, for example, Raisler Corp.'s modern system insures complete safety day and night, whether the park is open or closed.

At peak, a total of 2200 workmen were in the field. Construction was equivalent to building six separate small-sized cities.

An unusual highlight is the Freedomland-operated wood-working mill, where 200 specialized often worked around the clock. They turned out an interesting cross-section of products—from old-fashioned railroad station to chicken coop. They also made boats, trains, dark rides; all the unusual effects—or "gingerbread"—that reproduces a bygone era.

## Great Lakes Waterproofed

On the site, artificial stones and bricks were also made to last indefinitely. This was done in the cast plaster shop. So realistic were results they couldn't often be told from the real thing.

Freedomland's "Great Lakes" were waterproofed in less than 30 days; done under the handicap of around-the-clock pumping to hold back the 10 acres of ground water. In the park, all the many waterways are interconnected by an underground system operated on the gravity-flow principle. Landscaping was a vast improvement on the original. Labriola Nurseries planted nearly 50,000 individual trees and plants in their relative Freedomland locations. At times, these had to be hot-house grown for many months before moving. In the park, one will be able to see the "Rocky Mountains" covered with its natural vegetation; buffalo grass on the western plains; oleanders in Louisiana; wild orchids in Florida; complete fields of corn and wheat in the Kansas farm area.

Describing the overall construction job, staff heads Randall Duell, vice-president of Marco Design and Ed O'Brien, project manager for Turner-Aberthaw, say it was an intricate combination of movie-set design and big-scale engineering.

An interesting angle was the unusually high morale of the workers. One was heard to remark how proud he would be when he brought his boy to Freedomland, pointed to the recreated Midwest, and could say, "Look, son, I helped build that part of America."



Workers rebuild Little Old New York

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